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Massive crowd gathers in downtown Kelowna for ‘freedom’ protest rally



By [Doyle Potenteau](#) & [Darrian Matassa-Fung](#) • Global News

Posted March 20, 2021 7:58 pm ▾

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Around 700 people gathered on Saturday in Kelowna to protest against the government’s COVID-19 restrictions and health orders. They were calling it a freedom rally – Mar 20, 2021



-A A+

A large crowd gathered in downtown Kelowna on Saturday afternoon to protest the province's ongoing [COVID-19](#) restrictions and health orders.

Well in excess of 500 people, the gathering at Stuart Park was dubbed a 'freedom rally.'

The protest happened in conjunction with a "World Wide Rally for Freedom and Democracy," a global event featuring rallies across 100 cities.

Darrian Matassa-Fung 

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Today I was at an anti-restriction rally in Kelowna. When trying to film and stay physically distanced from the crowd, I was surrounded and forced into the crowd by protesters. A glimpse below at how journalists are sometimes treated at these rallies.

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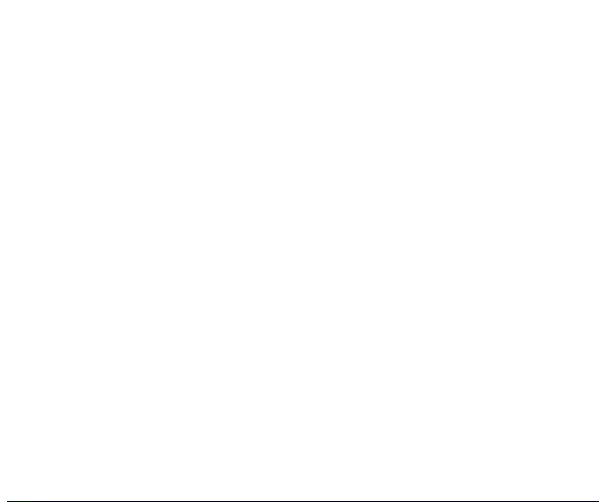


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In Kelowna, a large convoy of protesters could be seen parading through the city.

One of the event organizers, David Lindsay, proclaimed that now is the time is now to stand up for what he says is an infringement of Canadian rights.

"It's important to let people know we have a right of assembly, association and free speech, and it's important to let everybody know the facts don't support what the government is saying," Lindsay told Global News.

Notably, Lindsay is facing four fines for hosting previous rallies, but says he's challenging those tickets in court.

"Disputes have been filed on them, I am going to be challenging them," he said.

"What I can tell you is one has been stayed by the Crown and I expect the rest will as well."

1:26

Hundreds gather for anti-mask rally in Edmonton

Hundreds gather for anti-mask rally in Edmonton – Feb 20, 2021

Protests in downtown Kelowna occur almost weekly. And just as often, the protestors are often met by counter-protesters. Heather Friesen, a local activist, was one of them.

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“I believe this is wrong,” Friesen said of Saturday’s rally. “I don’t think any freedoms are being infringed, I believe they have alternative motives.

“Kelowna has become a beacon of hate, and it’s because this is allowed to foster and no one has checked it. I’m tired of it and it’s time as a community to fight back.”

1:51

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Backlash grows after Walk for Freedom protesters seen carrying torches in Calgary – Feb 28, 2021

Earlier in the week, a B.C. Supreme Court judge ruled that bans on outdoor protests were an infringement on rights and freedoms with respect to public protests.

The decision stemmed from a court battle between a group of Lower Mainland churches and the province's ban on in-person worship.

That court decision can be seen [here](#).

1:26

Hundreds gather for anti-mask rally in Edmonton

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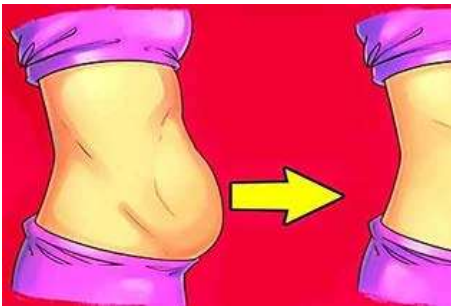
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